be offended by their vulgarity. We have often been importuned by gentlemen and ladies to attend them to the Carron and other warehouses to choose stoves, but have nearly as often returned without choosing any of the patterns which we have been shewn, the parties instead being willing to pay five times as much for plainer and neater articles of good quality, though, in fact, scarcely after any design, and with little elegance beyond those of the material and its polish; on some occasions we have found, after all the patterns have been looked over, only one neat one has been found, the purchase of which has been determined upon as a *pis aller*, however inappropriate it might happen to be for the particular building within which it was to be fixed. Now, if the vulgarity were to be discharged from all such articles, with few exceptions less work, both in the formation of the models and in the articles as executed, would be required.

We have been told by the venders of these things, that if by chance any article happen to come into the market which makes some approach to neat elegance of design, such is the natural inclination of mankind towards good taste, that many thousand copies of such articles are always immediately sold, and their manufacture continues for years a source of profitable merchandizing. We shall not this week say more upon this particular subject.

There are, in the collection, specimens of stained glass, mosaics, parquettes, encaustic tile pavements, and a variety of other things into which we shall go at some length next number.

Having, as we hinted above, listened to great complaints upon the subject of the specimens of carving, which are indeed comparatively few, and many of which are not applicable to the style of the building, we now only state that we have heard that Mr. Rogers, the eminent and natural carver (like Willement) did not at first intend contributing, but being pressed so to do, sent works of art carved in wood to the value of upwards of 800*l.*, which, though few of them are in the Gothic style, are many of them brilliant, and such specimens as would do honour to any age; but on visiting the collection we were surprised to find only few of his subjects exhibited and none of them catalogued; on inquiry, we were told that many of the extraordinary works of this accomplished architectural artist were absolutely placed down in a dark cellar beneath the building; and we were facetiously told by a dry cicerone, they are there preserved like gooseberrys underground, to be brought up as rare phenomena ont of season. We are sorry for this, for we suppose that among the subjects must be some applicable to Pointed Architecture, in which style we know Mr. Rogers to be as eminent in correctness, elegance, and high finish as he is for his master-touch in the vivifying of dry wood into fruit, flowers, tendril, joint and muscle, and as heretofore was his great predecessor, Grinling Gibbons

The specimens are in general well-placed for view, though no doubt some, as must necessarily be the case, are in inferior situations. But (during this brilliant weather at least) the light from the great roof-lantern so overpowers the stained glass and some other of the specimens, that scarcely can any idea be drawn, even by analogy, of the effect which these subjects would produce, if fixed to situations in the Houses of Parliament, with the subduing of illumination caused by wire guards, and the weather-soils over mullioned windows.—We trust, in justice to the contributors of this exhibition, this matter of complaint will be remedied.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.

On the 23rd instant, being St. George's day (the anniversary of the society), the following gentlemen were elected officers for the year ensuing:—

George, Earl of Aberdeen, K.T., F.R.S., President.
Thomas Amyot, Esq., F.R.S., Treasurer.
Nicholas Carlisle, Esq., K.H., D.C.L., F.R.S., Secretary.
Sir Henry Ellis, Knt., K.H., B.C.L., F.R.S., Secretary.
Hudson Gurney, Esq., F.R.S., V.P.
Henry Hallam, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., V.P.
William Richard Hamilton, Esq., F.R.S., V.P.
Philip, Viscount Mahon, V.P.
Capt. Wm. H. Smyth, R.N., K.S.F., D.C.L., F.R.S.
Thomas Stapleton, Esq.
Albert Way, Esq., M.A., Director.
Charles P. Barnwell, Esq., M.A., F.R.S.
Beriah Botfield, Esq.
Richard Aldworth Neville Griffin, Lord Braybrooke.
William Bromet, M.D.
Sir Stephen R. Glynne, Bart.
Thomas W. King, Esq.
Rev. Samuel Roffy Maitland, M.A., F.R.S.
Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, Esq., F.R.S.
Charles Roach Smith, Esq.

The fellows of the society afterwards celebrated the anniversary by dining together at the Freemasons' Tavern, Viscount Mahon, in the chair.

ELEMENTARY ESSAY ON MORTAR AND CEMENTS.*

BY JAMES WYLSON, HON. SEC. R.A.A.D.

21. QUICK-LIME AND SLAKED-LIME.—The term *quick-lime* is applied after calcination, and before the lime has been subjected to any other agency. The operation it undergoes preparatory to making mortar is termed *slaking* or *slacking* (*i.e.* loosening its fixed causticity): this consists in throwing over the heap a quantity of cold water, which, if it has been properly burnt, it absorbs quickly in abundance, causing it soon to become very hot, to crack into pieces with some noise, to puff up and exhale a large quantity of slightly-caustic vapour, consisting of part of the water and a small portion of lime—then falling into a dry and nearly impalpable powder, in which the remainder of the water has intimately combined with the lime, forming what is called *hydrate of lime*, or in plain, practical parlance, *slaked lime*. A degree of discreet practical tact is necessary to be exercised in this process; for if too little water be used, the desired result is not produced, and if too much, the lime is swelled and rendered liable to continue light and porous and of a pulverulent tendency. The slaking gives an increase of about one-fourth on the previous weight, and which it would take a red heat to separate. Good common lime, properly calcined and fresh from the kiln, begins to slake the instant that water is thrown on it, greatly augmenting in volume, sometimes indeed so much as, when slaked to a paste, to have three times the bulk that it had in the state of quick-lime; if over burnt, however, it slakes slowly. Limes of poor quality neither slake so quickly, give out so great a heat, nor swell so much; which is the case also with those limes that are of an hydraulic character; for these, and such other limes as do not slake readily, there is a practice of reducing the lumps by grinding or pounding previous to slaking. Before making mortar, it is usual to screen the lime, if it is of the chalk kind, for the purpose of keeping back such pieces as are imperfectly burnt, and consequently have not been reduced to powder by the slaking, as these would otherwise injure the quality of the mortar. This method is evidently preferable to grinding, which is instead adopted in composing some mortars and cements: screening is not usually necessary with stone-lime. There is another mode of slaking often adopted in winter, which is, by totally immersing the lime in a large vat of water; when, the lime-water being drained off, the slaked lime remains in the condition of a paste; and the sand being wet with rain, as we may assume it to be frequently in that season, no further addition of water is required in making the mortar; but both ingredients are in a ready state for amalgamation. In the summer season this method is not so suitable, the sand being then, in general, too hot and absorbent: this process may better be observed towards hydraulic limes than with common white limes.†

22. Quick-lime should be used as soon as possible; but if not intended for immediate use, ought to be put into water-proof casks soon after being burnt; for, when it becomes cold, it begins to re-absorb carbonic acid, enlarges in bulk, and by falling asunder, and eventually approaching nearly its original state of chalk or carbonate of lime, or rather that of the dust of limestone.* Chalk-lime has a greater avidity than stone-lime for carbonic-acid, and the white limes recover it most rapidly, being therefore the most speedily injured in quality by exposure. Magnesian-lime, being one of the slowest in this re-absorption, retains its causticity much longer; Argillaceous-lime possesses a similar property. Workmen heap the slaked-lime together and cover it with sand, to preserve it as far as possible, when not required for instant use. Lime is sold in London by the hundred, which signifies 100 pecks or 25 bushels.

(*To be continued in our next.*)

* Continued from p. 201.

† A burning sun was considered by the Roman masons to be as hurtful to mortar as the action of frost.

VISIT OF PRINCE ALBERT AND THE COMMISSIONERS OF FINE ARTS TO THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

On the afternoon of last Saturday, at four o'clock, his Royal Highness Prince Albert left Gwydyr House, Whitehall, where the Commissioners of Fine Arts, of which his Royal Highness is chairman, sit, and proceeded to the new Houses of Parliament. The Prince was accompanied by Viscount Palmerston, Lord Colborne, Mr. Gally Knight, Mr. Hallam, and Mr. Wyse, members of the commission. Upon his Royal Highness's arrival, he was received by Mr. Barry, the architect, and Mr. Grissell.

The visit was understood to be a formal one, suggested for the purpose of ascertaining the progress made in the erection of the new houses of legislature; and by inspection of the various compartments to form an opinion as to which of them were best suited for the displaying of frescos, statues, and other works of art.

His Royal Highness and the other commissioners first proceeded to the terrace, and inspected the elevation of the river front, and the carvings thereon; after which they directed their steps to the Victoria Tower, which is now 30 feet high. Subsequently to inspecting this tower, the majestic beauty of which called forth the admiration of the Prince, the party proceeded up a temporary staircase, erected where the grand staircase will be, which her Majesty will ascend on the occasion of the opening of Parliament, to the guard-room, and from thence to the robing-room, where Mr. Barry produced his plans, and explained the different arrangements of that part of the works. The great point of interest at this portion of the buildings was the Victoria Gallery, through which the Queen will pass in procession from the Royal robing rooms to the House of Lords. This gallery is to be devoted to the reception of statues and busts of all the great literary, naval, and military men of bygone times; and the walls will be covered with fresco paintings. A considerable time was spent in this part of the building, and his Royal Highness paid the most marked attention to the architect's explanations of his future intentions.

The parties afterwards directed their attention to the royal porch or entry to the House of Lords, in which a temporary scaffolding had been erected in order that his Royal Highness, and the rest of the commissioners, might inspect the interior of the House of Peers. The stone-work and elaborate carving of the interior elicited unqualified expressions of praise from the Prince and the other commissioners. This building has reached an altitude of 60 feet, and the main windows on both sides are fixed. It was explained to his Royal Highness that the lower parts of the walls, to the height of about 20 feet, are to be lined with enriched carved oak wainscoting, the upper part of the walls being coated with freestone from Caen, in Normandy, having enriched corbels, supporting niches, in which are to be placed marble statues of the Kings and Queens of England.

His Royal Highness, desirous of ascertaining the effect that would be produced by a statue in one of the niches, had one of the masons placed therein, and was pleased at the result.

It was stated that the greater part of the works of the new House of Peers was of sufficient height to receive the roof, which, we understand, is composed of wrought and cast iron, and is in a state of great forwardness,

* This re-absorption is said to have been first discovered by Dr. Higgins.

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